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The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

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Statement

Each country faces specific challenges in its pursuit of sustainable development. The most vulnerable countries and, in particular, African countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States deserve special attention, as do countries in situations of conflict and post-conflict. There are also serious challenges within many middle-income countries.

The 2016 High-level Political Forum (HLPF) should focus on the needs of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Sustainable development is the international community's most urgent priority, and the core aim of the post-2015 development agenda. The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) operates at the centre of the United Nations system's work on all three pillars of sustainable development — economic, social and environmental. So, within the United Nations system, ECOSOC has the main responsibility for following up on all major past international conferences linked to the three pillars of sustainable development, and is carrying this through in the post-2015 world. As a hub for the exchange of knowledge and mutual learning, ECOSOC has had an instrumental role in examining lessons learned from the Millennium Development Goals, assessing the transition into the post-2015 agenda, considering implementation issues, exploring the scope of a renewed global partnership and inviting youth to share their views on their future.

We need to promote concrete measures for different groups to work together to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and the post-2015 development agenda; provide opportunity for youth to voice their opinions, share ideas, and think together about what they can do to achieve sustainable development.

In these Goals and targets, we need a strong supremely ambitious and transformational vision. We have to create a world free of poverty, hunger, disease and want, where all life can thrive. We need a world free of fear and violence; a world with universal literacy; a world with equitable and universal access to quality education at all levels, to health care and social protection, where physical, mental and social well-being is assured. A world where we reaffirm our commitments regarding the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation and where there is improved hygiene; and where food is sufficient, safe, affordable and nutritious. A world where human habitats are safe, resilient and sustainable and where there is universal access to affordable, reliable and sustainable energy.

We need strong commitment to achieving this Agenda and utilizing it to the full to transform our world for the better by 2030.